

Meet Duxbury

Jim Goldenberg Alternative Energy Committee member

BY JP O'NEIL
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Jim Goldenberg served as the Chairman of the Alternative Energy Committee for three years before recently being succeeded in his post.

As Chairman of the Alternative Energy Committee (AEC), Jim Goldenberg is always preparing for what is ahead. Goldenberg already knew that we were damaging our planet, so he wanted to know how to get involved to help turn things around.

"I was interested in renewable energy, climate change, that kind of thing," Goldenberg said. "I contacted the AEC when it was in its infancy, and it had been a little bit dormant for a few months, and the committee members were just getting together for their first meeting they had had in a few months. So I came to the next meeting and have been there ever since. It's been about five or six years now."

When Goldenberg first joined, there was no chairman of the committee. But as the committee started to grow, everyone knew that a chairman was needed. Frank Duggan stepped up to take the role as chair for the next two or three years and Goldenberg followed after him.

The role of the AEC has been focused on alternative energy sources, and facilitating saving the town money by utilizing renewable energy.

"We facilitated solar arrays in the transfer station, we organized and created that project," Goldenberg said. "We brought in a developer to develop it through a request for proposal process and worked with the town to negotiate those agreements and get it put in place. Now it's built and running and its producing electricity that is saving the town money and electricity."

The AEC also assisted the school building committee in helping to facilitate solar panels on the new school. The AEC assisted at the beginning of the process, but are not involved in that project at this time. The schools are now handling that themselves. The solar panels were first implemented by the AEC about three or four years ago. Every year since, they save annually 30 percent energy. "There is no carbon emissions, so they don't contribute to climate change either, it's clean energy," Goldenberg said. "And it's not a limited resource like coal and oil."



Goldenberg's Boston-based, private real-estate firm, Cathartes, was founded in 1992.

Photos courtesy of the Cathartes company website

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Goldenberg believes we have to significantly decrease the amount of carbon that's going into the atmosphere as it's creating a climate change, a rise in temperature and it's having a lot of negative impacts such as sea levels rising, storms getting worse. "When you think about things 20 years out, we're spending a lot of time and a lot of money in renewable energy, and it's costing taxpayers money," Goldenberg said. "But 100 years from now we will not be able to keep using the same resources we use now and we wouldn't have any new energy to turn to." The AEC was successfully able to produce structures to save money for most of the town's use of electricity. Once the new solar panels are complete, the AEC will be looking in other directions to help.

"We're starting to look at other initiatives like conservation, and storm preparedness," Goldenberg said. "We need to be focusing on the impact of climate change on the town and how to be ready for it."

One project the AEC would like to complete in the near future is providing electricity for emergency services such as the police station, or a shelter like the senior center even when the power goes out. Outside of the AEC, Goldenberg is a real estate developer. He graduated from Colgate University where he majored in economics. A typical day for Goldenberg consists of getting up early to play tennis, working in Boston three days a week for a real estate company before coming home to help the kids with homework. On summer days, Goldenberg enjoys to fish. Goldenberg had been chair for the last three years, but recently turned it over to Steve Campbell.

"I still plan to remain part of the organization," Goldenberg said. "But my new role will be as a member."